

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the present amendments and the following remarks. By this amendment, claims 24 and 33 are amended. As a result, upon entry of this amendment claims 1-41 are pending in this case, with claims 1, 14, 24, 34 and 41 being independent claims, and with claims 4, 7, 9, 14-23, 26, 28 and 34-41 having been withdrawn from consideration in response to a restriction requirement. Because no claims are added by this amendment, it is believed that no additional fees are due for the consideration of this paper. However, if additional fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge such fees to deposit account number 13-2855.

Fourth Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants respectfully request consideration of the reference cited in the Fourth Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement filed on March 22, 2005 and received by the Patent Office on March 25, 2005 according to the information under the “Image File Wrapper” tab on the Public PAIR webpage for the present application. Applicants respectfully submit that the Fourth Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement was timely filed and no additional fee is due at this time for consideration of the reference cited therein.

Claim Amendments and Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 24 and 33 are amended to more clearly recite that the inner surfaces of the body member are configured to slidably engage or retentively engage at least one lift cord of the temporary window covering. The amendments to claims 24 and 33 are supported by the specification as originally filed at least at Figs. 12-20 and the accompanying text at page 10, lines 5-20 and page 11, lines 5-29. The inner surfaces defining the channel 152 and the throughbore 178 are configured to slidably engage a lift cord disposed therein, and the inner surface defining the slot 168 is configured to retentively engage a lift cord disposed therein. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as amended do not positively recite the lift cords, and the combination cord guide and cord lock is not recited in combination with the

lift cords in claims 24-33. In view of the foregoing amendments, applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 24, 32 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,581,250 (Matsushima et al.), and claims 24, 25 and 29-33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,250,597 (Ford et al.). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the present amendments and respectfully submit that pending claims 24-33 are not properly rejectable over the applied references for the following reasons.

Claim 24 recites a combined cord guide and cord lock comprising a body member and three inner surfaces of the body member defining voids within the body member and intersecting the outer surfaces of the body member and each other in the manner recited in the claim. The first inner surface defines a channel within the body member, the second inner surface intersects the first inner surface and defines a throughbore, and the third inner surface intersects the second inner surface and defines a slot configured to retentively engage a lift cord disposed therein. The first and second surfaces are configured to slidably engage at least one lift cord. One example of a combined cord guide and cord lock as recited in claim 24 is provided in Figs. 18-20 wherein the inner surface defining the channel 152 is intersected by the inner surface defining the throughbore 178, and the inner surface defining the slot 168 intersects the inner surface defining the throughbore 178. These relationships are further illustrated in the cross-sectional view of Fig. 15, wherein the embodiment of the combined cord guide and cord lock 150 differs in the slot 168 being oriented parallel to the rear side 164 and front side 180 as opposed to being angled relative to the sides 164, 180 as shown in Fig. 20. The channel 152 and throughbore 178 slidably engage lift cords 22, 24 of a temporary window shade 10, while the slot 168 retentively engages the lift cords 22, 24.

Neither of the applied references teaches or suggests a combined cord guide and cord lock having three inner surfaces defining voids and intersecting in the manner recited in claim 24. Matsushima et al. teach at most a body having one surface defining a first void configured to slidably engage a cord or string and intersecting a second surface defining a

second void configured to retentively engage a cord or string. Matsushima et al. teach a fastening device having a main body 1 with a hole 3 having a sliding passage portion 4 and a braking passage portion 5. (*See, e.g.*, Matsushima et al., Fig. 1 and accompanying text at col. 7, lines 1-16). The sliding passage portion 4 has a diameter wider than a string S so that the string S is capable of moving freely back and forth. The braking passage portion 5 is smaller than the diameter of the sliding passage portion 4 and the diameter of the string S to prevent the string S from moving back and forth. A narrow portion 6 formed at a joint between the passage portions 4 and 5 is smaller than the width of the braking passage portion 5 and prevents the string S from freely changing positions between the passage portions 4 and 5.

As described, the sliding passage portion 4 is the only void of the body 1 that could be considered to be defined by an inner surface configured to slidably engage the string S. The braking passage portion 5 and narrow portion 6 do not slidably engage the string S. Therefore, the presence of two intersecting inner surfaces each defining a void and being configured to slidably engage a lift cord is wholly missing from the body 1 of Matsushima et al., and Matsushima et al. do not appear to suggest alternative configurations of the body 1 wherein two intersecting inner surfaces are provided. In conclusory fashion, the Office action the requirements of separate inner surfaces defining separate voids (a channel and a throughbore) are merged into a single element of a “channel/throughbore 4 [having] first and second inner surfaces” without attempting to identify the surfaces meeting the limitations recited in the claim, and the manner in which the surfaces meet all of the recited limitations of claim 24. For the reasons discussed above, Matsushima et al. do not teach or suggest two intersecting inner surface defining voids and being configured to slidably engage a lift cord or string as recited in claim 24 and, therefore, Matsushima et al. do not anticipate or render obvious claims 24-33 and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Turning to Ford et al., the reference does not disclose or suggest intersecting inner surfaces defining voids within a body member, and does not disclose or suggest an inner surface of the body member being configured to retentively engage a lift cord as recited in claim 24. Ford et al. disclose a cord guide having a pulley housing 2 in the form of a U-shaped body portion or clevis 21 with a pulley 22 rotatably supported therein. (*See, e.g.*, Ford et al., Figs. 1-5 and accompanying text at col. 4, lines 1-17). An opening 28 is provided

in the bottom of the clevis 21 for passage of the shade cord, and includes cord guides 29 through which the cord or cords pass. Further openings 31 are provided in horizontal alignment with the upper edge of the pulley 22 for the passage of the cords toward the shade structure. The clevis 21 further includes a locking mechanism in the form of a sloped slot 51 with an knurled pin 52 positioned therein, with the cords passing through the opening 28, over the pulley 22 and behind the pin 52. (Ford, Fig. 5 and accompanying text at col. 4, line 53 through col. 4, line 8). The pin 52 moves downward in the slot 51 to release the cord when the cord is pulled downwardly, and moves upward in the slot 51 to lock the cord against upward movement.

First, the surfaces defining the openings 28 and 31 do not intersect as required of the first and second inner surfaces of claim 24. As shown in the drawings, the clevis 21 formed by outer walls but is hollow so that the pulley 22 and pin 52 may be disposed therein. The openings 28 and 31 pass through the outer walls of the hollow clevis 21, but are not illustrated or described as intersecting. Similarly, the sloped slot 51 is an opening through an outer wall of the clevis 21 defined by a surface that does not intersect the surfaces defining the openings 28 and 31. Consequently, Ford et al. does not teach intersecting inner surfaces as recited in claim 24. Second, the inner surfaces defining the openings 28 and 31 are not configured to slidably engage the cord, and Ford et al. specifically teach away from the surfaces being configured to slidably engage the cord. The clevis 21 is configured to pivot to maintain the plane of the pulley 22 in alignment with the cords to minimize friction between the cords and the cord guides 29. (Ford et al., col. 4, lines 10-13; col. 5, lines 8-17). Further, the openings 31 are positioned close to the rotational axis about which the clevis 21 rotates to ensure that pivoting of the clevis 31 does not generate undesired friction between the cords and the surfaces defining the openings 31. (Ford et al., col. 5, lines 17-23). Therefore, contrary to the limitations recited in claim 24, Ford et al. specifically teach away from the surfaces defining the openings 28 and 31 being configured to slidably engage the cords.

Finally, Ford et al. do not teach a third surface of a body member defining a slot and being configured to retentively engage lift cords as recited in claim 24. The cords in Ford et al. are engaged by the pulley 22 and the pin 52, and not by a surface of the body portion or clevis 21. As discussed above, Ford et al. specifically teach that the cord guide is designed to

avoid engagement of the cords by the surfaces of the clevis 21. The outer surfaces of the pulley 22 and the pin 52 are not inner surfaces of the clevis 21, and the surface of the clevis defining the slot 51 does not slidably, retentively or otherwise engage the cord. Moreover, Ford et al. do not teach or suggest reconfiguring the clevis 21 so that any portion of the clevis 21 retentively engages the cord. Therefore, Ford et al. also do not teach or suggest, and in fact teach away from, an inner surface of the body portion or clevis 21 retentively engaging the cords. For at least these reasons, claims 24-33 are also not anticipated or rendered obvious by Ford et al., and applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections of these claims in view of the Matsushima et al. and/or Ford et al. references.

For at least the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims and allowance of the currently pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner wish to discuss the foregoing or any matter of form in an effort to advance this application towards allowance, she is urged to telephone the undersigned at the indicated number.

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